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THE AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION OF IRON AND STEEL WORKERS.*

THE Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers is a trades-union, and has been affiliated with the American Federation of Trades-unions since December, 1887, and is still connected with that body. It consists of two hundred and ninety-two sub-lodges in good standing, as reported at the convention held in June, 1892, and about twenty-four thousand taxable members. This number, however, does not include those having travelling cards. Among its membership are some of the ablest labor leaders in this country, and its ranks are filled with skilled men. It embraces all men working in and around rolling mills, steel works, chain works, nail, tack, spike, bolt, and nut factories, pipe mills, and all works which are run in connection with these industries, except laborers. The latter may be admitted at the discretion of a subordinate lodge, to which application must be made for membership. The objects of the Association are the elevation of its members, the maintenance of their best interests, and to obtain, by conciliation or by other means that are just and legal, a fair remuneration to its members for their labor; and it aims to afford mutual protection to members against broken contracts, obnoxious rules, unlawful discharge, or other systems of injustice or oppression.† There is no secret about the organization except the password. The officers furnish managers and mill-owners with copies of their by-laws every year, or when they are

* I am greatly indebted to Mr. William Weihe, of Pittsburg, for nine years President of the Amalgamated Association, for many important facts. Without his kindly aid it would have been difficult to produce this sketch.

† Constitution and General Laws Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers.

revised, or when there is any material change in the government of the order, so that they may be acquainted with all the laws and rules of the Association.*

The great labor contest, part strike and part lockout, and having all the elements of each, that took place at Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892, was between this powerful organization, on the one hand, and the Carnegie Steel Company, Limited, of Pittsburg, owners of the Homestead Steel Works, at Homestead, on the other hand. This contest called the special attention of the public to the Amalgamated Association, and has made its history one of interest and of importance in the study of the varied phases of industrial progress in this country.

As its name implies, the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers of the United States is the result of the consolidation of various other orders and societies. The present order was organized at Pittsburg in August, 1876. The original societies which were consolidated were known previously thereto as the United Sons of Vulcan, consisting of boilers and puddlers, the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers of the United States, consisting of men employed at the furnaces and rolls, and the Iron and Steel Roll Hands Union, composed of catchers, hookers, helpers, and others engaged about the trains of works. These were the three separate and distinct organizations existing among men employed in iron and steel works prior to their amalgamation August 4, 1876. The oldest of these three bodies was the United Sons of Vulcan, which originated in Pittsburg, where a local union was formed April 17, 1858, known as Iron City Forge. It consisted exclusively of boilers. This order was founded by a few men who had held meetings secretly for some time for the purpose of discussing the advisability of organization, through the influence of

*Testimony of William Weihe before Sub-committee on Judiciary of the House of Representatives, July, 1892. *Mis. Doc. No. 335, 52 Cong., 1st Sess.*

which those employed in the trade could obtain better compensation for their labor, as well as secure more favorable and comfortable conditions under which their work could be performed. The men who were prominent in this movement were Matthew Haddock, James Davis, Patrick Graham, Hugh Hagan, Joseph Mellard, and several others. As in all like cases, it was true in this that the pioneers of the movement were extremely careful how far their fellow-craftsmen in rolling mills should be admitted to the select order; and for several years much discernment was exercised in the selection of men for membership. The fear was that the order might be betrayed, and the employers learn of all the features of the movement. In consequence of this secrecy the order made but little progress until the year 1861, when, as a result of the Civil War, a great revival in the iron trade took place, and made its influence felt in the new life given to the labor organization. The greatest efforts were then put forth to extend the principles upon which the organization of the United Sons of Vulcan was founded, and to bring other sections of the country into sympathy and union with it through officially delegated organizers. Through this method local forges were instituted in Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Missouri; and so rapid had the growth been during that year (1861) that a call was issued for a national convention, to be held in Pittsburg, September 8, 1862, the result of which was the organization of the Grand Forge of the United States of the United Sons of Vulcan. At this convention a constitution and by-laws, to govern both grand and sub-lodges, were adopted. The convention declared that the association should be known as the National Forge of the United States, United Sons of Vulcan, and that it should consist of delegates elected from sub-forges, composed of practical puddlers and boilers ac-

knowledging the authority and jurisdiction of the National Forge. The object of the National Forge was to facilitate the further organization of the trade represented, for the mutual benefit and protection of its members, and to secure co-operation whenever it should be required. The officers of the Grand Lodge elected at the first convention, September, 1862, were Miles S. Humphreys,* Grand Master; Patrick Graham, Grand Vulcan; H. Thompson, Grand Treasurer; and Michael Grogan, Secretary. Only practical workmen, known as boilers and puddlers, could become members. Their helpers were not eligible. The number of sub-forges represented and in existence at the time of this convention has not been given in any records that are obtainable. The first published report was not made until 1867; but the membership continued to increase as more sub-forges became established throughout the country in connection with the different mills and where the organizers could reach the workmen. Of course, the efforts of the organizers were put forth with a great deal of caution, in order to prevent the employers from discovering the membership, as it was feared at that time that those who were active in the organization might be looked upon with prejudice. The order prospered in varied degree, dealing with strikes and lockouts, which frequently took place; but in 1867 it found that the custom of allowing strikes and lockouts to be inaugurated solely by the men employed in the mill where the grievance arose ought to be changed. The financial support for members involved in labor difficulties was obtained entirely by voluntary subscriptions. At the convention held at Harrisburg in 1867 the system of legalizing strikes and supporting the same systematically was adopted instead of the custom just stated, and remained as then ordered until the amalgamation.

*Mr. Humphreys was afterwards appointed Commissioner of Industrial Statistics for the State of Pennsylvania.

The question of establishing a sick and death benefit feature was brought before several conventions of the order; but the proposition was always defeated, the main object of the organization for years being to educate its members and to solidify those employed in the trade, for the purpose of elevating them morally and socially, with the hope that thereby they might eventually reach a position in which they would be more thoroughly benefited financially for their labor. So the order paid its attention largely to matters in this direction rather than to any of the benefit features which often accompany the organization of a trades-union.

Previous to 1858, the year in which the boilers and puddlers organized, as stated, the price paid for boiling and puddling was irregular. In some instances, two or three mills in the same town would be paying one rate for a certain class of work, while other mills would be paying a different rate for like services. Such a state of affairs, of course, resulted in creating trouble among those receiving the lower rate. Puddling was mostly done in mills making iron rails, and boiling in those mills manufacturing different kinds of merchant iron. The rate paid for boiling in 1837 was \$7.00 per ton; but this price was gradually reduced to \$3.25 per ton, the point reached in 1858, when the market price of iron was nearly \$10.00 per ton more than in 1837. From this it is easily seen that the boilers were not receiving a fair proportion of the profit of production for their labor, and so the minds of the workmen became greatly agitated. It was these features of variation in the pay for like work, and the reduction of wages when the price of iron was rising that were influential in forming and developing the order of the United Sons of Vulcan. The agitation continued, and with increased force; for from 1858 to 1864 the price for boiling advanced from \$3.25 to \$9.00 per ton in the western part of Pennsylvania, and also throughout the country,

but the advance in the price of merchant bar iron, for instance, was from \$95.00 per ton to \$168.00. In 1865 the price paid for boiling decreased to \$5.75 per ton, and that for merchant bar iron dropped to \$103.00 per ton; but in 1866 the latter advanced to \$112.00 per ton, and boiling rose to \$9.00. By this time the United Sons of Vulcan had become thoroughly organized, and felt more independent of the action of employers than formerly. During the winter of 1867 the manufacturers proposed a reduction of \$2.00 per ton for boiling, the acceptance of which would have brought the rate down to \$7.00. This reduction the men refused to accept, whereupon the manufacturers closed their mills and locked the men out until July 3, 1867, when the workmen were notified that the manufacturers would meet a committee representing them. Committees from both sides then met, and made an agreement for a scale of prices. As this was the first instance in this country of a sliding scale under which the price of labor should be determined in accordance with the price of the product, it is given in full:—

*Memorandum of Agreement **

Made this thirteenth day of February, 1865, between a Committee of Boilers and a Committee from the Iron Manufacturers, appointed to fix a scale of prices to be paid for boiling pig iron, based on the manufacturers' card of prices; it being understood either party shall have the right and privilege to terminate this agreement by giving ninety days' notice to the other party, and that there shall be no deviation without such notice.

When the manufacturers' card of prices are at the rates named below, the price for boiling shall be at the prices opposite per ton of 2,240 pounds.

MANUFACTURERS.	BOILERS.
8½ cents per pound,	\$9.00
8¼ " " "	8.75
8 " " "	8.50
7¾ " " "	8.25

* From an original copy of the scale in the possession of Joseph D. Weeks, Esq., of Pittsburg.

MANUFACTURERS.			BOILERS.	
$7\frac{1}{2}$ and $7\frac{1}{4}$	cents	per pound,	. . . . .	\$8.00
7 and $6\frac{3}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	7.50
$6\frac{1}{2}$ and $6\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	7.00
6 and $5\frac{3}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	6.50
$5\frac{1}{2}$ and $5\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	6.00
5 and $4\frac{3}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	5.75
$4\frac{1}{2}$ and $4\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	5.50
4 and $3\frac{3}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	5.00
$3\frac{1}{2}$ and $3\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	4.75
3 and $2\frac{3}{4}$	"	"	. . . . .	4.50
$2\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	. . . . .	4.00

This is not only in all probability the earliest attempt to establish a sliding scale in the industries of this country, as stated, antedating, as it does, by four years the arrangement in the anthracite coal regions, but it is also probably the first attempt in this country to secure the benefits of conciliation in labor difficulties. The operation of the scale adopted was of short duration. The price of iron fell from seven and a half cents per pound in February to four cents in July, and of course the wages for boiling fell in proportion. The men gave the requisite ninety days' notice to terminate the scale, at the expiration of which time the price of boiling had risen to \$6.00 under the scale; but the men demanded \$8.00, without the scale, and received it. This price prevailed until near the close of 1866, when the puddlers demanded an advance to \$9.00, which demand was conceded, but under protest, as other demands had been. This concession, however, did not stand long; for soon the manufacturers became unwilling to continue the prices then paid, and gave notice of a reduction to \$7.00 per ton. In this movement all the manufacturers, with but very few exceptions, united, not only in Pittsburg, but in all iron works in the adjacent country. The puddlers refused to accept the reduction, and as a consequence a lockout was established, which lasted from December, 1866, to the middle

of May, 1867, all the mills, with two or three exceptions, remaining idle all that time. The lockout was terminated by the manufacturers paying the old wages. Although the manufacturers resumed work, it was evident that they could not and would not long pay the prices then prevailing; and the United Sons of Vulcan determined to endeavor to again secure the adoption of a sliding scale. As a result of their efforts, committees from each side of the controversy came together; and after a number of meetings they agreed on July 23, 1867, upon another scale of prices, as follows:—

Memorandum of Agreement

Made this twenty-third day of July, 1867, between the Committees of Boilers and Manufacturers, to wit:—

That nine dollars per ton shall be paid for boiling iron until the seventeenth day of August, 1867. From that time until the fifteenth day of September eight dollars shall be paid.

After latter date the following scale shall be operative:—

IRON.				BOILING.	
5 cents card rates,	.	.	.	\$8.00	
$4\frac{3}{4}$ “ “ “	.	.	.	7.75	
$4\frac{1}{2}$ “ “ “	.	.	.	7.50	
$4\frac{1}{4}$ “ “ “	.	.	.	7.25	
4 “ “ “	.	.	.	7.00	
$3\frac{3}{4}$ “ “ “	.	.	.	6.75	
$3\frac{1}{2}$ “ “ “	.	.	.	6.50	
$3\frac{1}{4}$ “ “ “	.	.	.	6.25	
3 “ “ “	.	.	.	6.00	

Being twenty-five cents per ton reduction or advance for each change of one-quarter of a cent per pound on card rates. Either party to this arrangement can terminate the same by giving thirty days' notice to the other party.

It is further understood that immediate steps shall be taken by both parties, following said notice, to meet, and endeavor to arrange the difference, and settle the difficulty which occasioned said notice.

This scale, with a modification that allowed of an advance by tenths of a cent per pound instead of by quarters

of a cent, remained in force, and regulated the price of wages for boiling iron for seven years. It will be noted that there is no provision in the scale when the card rate is below three cents. As the card rate approached this figure, the manufacturers asked for a conference, with a view to arrange for a price for boiling when the card reached this point or went below it, claiming, which was not denied, that it was an understanding at the time of the adoption of the scale that it should be revised when iron reached three cents per pound.

The first conference was held November 7, 1874, when the manufacturers gave the required thirty days' notice to terminate the agreement, coupled with the proposition to effect "a reduction of one dollar per ton on a three cent card and all below that figure, and at the same time providing for an extension of their card rates from three cents to two and a half cents. During the thirty days, and before the notice had expired, a number of meetings were held, at which the men proposed a reduction of fifty cents per ton on a three cent card, wages, however, to extend no lower, should the price-list be reduced. This, however, the manufacturers refused. On the 5th of December, 1874, they held their last meeting, adjourning with the understanding that they agree to disagree." Then commenced the memorable strike which kept the many mills of Pittsburg in an almost complete state of idleness, especially the puddling departments, during the entire winter. In March the manufacturers proposed to arbitrate, but the men at that late day refused. Matters continued without material change until the 15th of April, 1875, when, at a meeting of the manufacturers, it was decided to resume at \$5.50, iron having fallen to two and a half cents per pound. This ended the strike; and it also ended all agreement between the manufacturers as a body and the puddlers as a body, each manufacturer signing the scale for himself, though the scale signed by each was the same. In a word,

though attempts have been made every year since to reach an agreement by committees, conciliation in arranging a scale for boiling ended with the strike of 1874-75. In other classes of the iron work, however, scales had been adopted that are still in force. Several classes of these workers had unions separate from the Sons of Vulcan.*

After the scale of prices made July 23, 1867, became operative, the iron mills of Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio were governed by it. Down the Ohio River, from Steubenville to Ironton, on both sides of the river, the rate was twenty-five cents per ton above the scale; from Portsmouth, Ohio, to Louisville, Kentucky, and at New Albany, Indiana, the rate was fifty cents per ton above the scale; while further west it was \$1.00 per ton above it. The arranging of the scale and the other stipulations in connection with it brought the United Sons of Vulcan into recognition by the manufacturers, and therefore paved the way for a more powerful organization which should unite the various workers in iron and steel; and so after the long puddlers' strike of 1874, carried on by the United Sons of Vulcan, each of the separate organizations began to agitate the propriety of amalgamating into one general organization. The men in all departments in the rolling mills realized that a more thorough system should exist, and one that would comprehend all the features in the iron and steel trade. They felt this to be a necessity, in order that they might obtain what they believed they were justly entitled to. The members continued to agitate the question of combining various trades until their convention was held at Philadelphia, in August, 1875, at which a resolution was adopted favoring the appointment of a committee to meet with similar committees of the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers of the United States and the Iron and Steel Roll Hands Union.

* "Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration," from the *Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor*, 1881.

The various conventions of the United Sons of Vulcan were held as follows, in August of the years named: Pittsburg, 1862; Wheeling, 1863; Pittsburg, 1864 and 1865; Cleveland, 1866; Pittsburg, 1867; Buffalo, 1868; Wheeling, 1869; Harrisburg, 1870; Chicago, 1871; Covington, 1872; Troy, 1873; Youngstown, 1874; Philadelphia, 1875; Pittsburg, 1876.

The officers of the Grand Forge of the United Sons of Vulcan were as follows: Miles S. Humphreys served as Grand Master from 1862 until 1866, in all five terms. Joseph Chiverton and B. A. McGinty served as Grand Master in 1860 and 1867, each serving a term of six months. John P. Edwards was Grand Master from August, 1868, until August, 1871. Hugh McLaughlin was President from August, 1871, to August, 1873, two terms. David Harris was President from August 1873, to August, 1875, two terms. Joseph Bishop was President from August, 1875, to August, 1876, when he was chosen President of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. The Grand Masters and Presidents also acted as Secretary of the organization. The titles of the officers were changed at the convention held at Harrisburg in 1870, the Grand Master being designated "President" and the Grand Vulcan "Vice-President," and the Grand Forge was designated as the "National Forge." The duties of the officers, however, remained as they had been. The ritual used at the initiatory ceremonies of the United Sons of Vulcan was similar to the one used afterwards by the Amalgamated Association, with the exception of a few changes necessary to conform to the conditions of the larger organization.

In summing up the work accomplished by the United Sons of Vulcan in the interest and for the welfare of their calling, it can be said that it was a good example for the other trades to pattern after, and it served as the real basis of the Amalgamated Association formed from the different

classes of workmen. The number of sub-forges in good working order during the last year of its existence was over ninety; and many men who were members at that time are now holding trusted and prominent positions in different sections of the country. The knowledge and experience they obtained through their connection with the pioneer organization in the iron trade have been of the greatest benefit to them.

I have gone thus into the details of this organization because it gave the initiative to the order which now exists. It was the first in point of time and the most important, and through its influence gave color, tone, and character to the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers.

The second order, chronologically, which was merged into the new Association, was the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers. This order was instituted in August, 1872, with a general office at Springfield, Illinois. The membership consisted chiefly of those who were in charge of furnaces and rolls in the finishing departments of the Western mills, but few of the members working east of the Alleghany Mountains. The main purpose of the organization was the cultivation of the principles of unionism among the men employed at heating and rolling iron and steel. In some localities local unions had been organized, but each independent of the other, so that each had rules and prices governing the mills in which it existed. When disputes arose, and especially relating to wages, the men had no particular system of ascertaining what the rate or custom was at other places. The result of this lack of co-operation was that the trade remained in a demoralized state; and so it became essential, in order to secure proper remuneration for skill and the arduous service rendered, that means should be devised by which the customs prevailing in other localities could be known, and most of those engaged in the trade began to realize that some better

system should be developed, lacking which they would always be subjected to the vicissitudes attending unorganized labor. So a few of the most enlightened men corresponded with those whom they knew to be working at other mills, and after much intercourse they organized the Grand Lodge of the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers of the United States. This was in August, 1872. John P. Jones was elected Grand Sire, Richard Sullivan Vice Grand Sire, and B. F. Spangler Grand Scribe. Several conventions were held at different places and times; but, as the proceedings were kept secret, or comparatively so, little is known of the first meetings of this order, the proceedings of only one of the conventions having been published. The organization lasted four years, or until the amalgamation which took place in 1876 as the result of the efforts of the order of the United Sons of Vulcan; but during those four years the new brotherhood had many difficulties to contend with. Trade was depressed, men were idle, and employers demanded reductions. These and other discouraging elements that arose prevented the order from making much headway; yet the members did not become discouraged, but remained firm in the cause to which they had pledged their efforts, believing that eventually their labors would bring the results that were sought in the beginning. The order extended into the States of Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Missouri, Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York, and West Virginia. As the membership was not numerous, the officers remained at their usual work, attending to their official duties after their day's work was done. In the case of strikes voluntary contributions were made for the support of those on strike or who were locked out. No sick or death benefits were established; and the legalizing of strikes was left entirely with local bodies, as was also the arranging of wages. The question of merging the order with others into one influential

organization was favored by the members, and their general officers were instructed to appoint a committee to confer with a committee of the United Sons of Vulcan and the Iron and Steel Roll Hands Union; and it was with this understanding that the last convention of the order was held in Pittsburg, on August 1, 1876.

The third organization which became a member of the Amalgamated Association was the Iron and Steel Roll Hands Union, composed of catchers, hookers, helpers, and others engaged about the trains of works. This order was organized June 2, 1873, with its general office at Columbus, Ohio. There being but few local lodges in existence, the energy put forth after the Grand Lodge was instituted caused it to be carried into other States; and some good and practical methods were introduced which benefited those employed around the furnaces and the trains of rolls. The prices paid to the men composing this order were irregular, no two mills paying the same rate, even though the work was similar. This created dissatisfaction. Whenever disputes arose, the men would be sent from one mill to another to find out what was being done; but no system existed for gaining information or for regulating affairs. The custom of legalizing strikes was the same as that which prevailed in the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers; that is, the ordering of the strike was left to the local bodies. Strike benefits were created through voluntary contributions, but neither sick nor death benefits were paid. This order had a brief life, practically struggling for existence until 1876, when it decided to merge itself with other organizations. The Grand Lodge officers at that time (1876) were David A. Plant, President, and William Martin, Secretary.

National conventions of the two last-named orders, the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers of the United States and the National

Union of Iron and Steel Roll Hands of the United States, were held in Indianapolis, in August, 1875; and the National Forge of the United Sons of Vulcan held its annual session at Philadelphia at the same time. The subject of amalgamation or consolidation having been agitated in all three orders, it was quite natural that at this time, as all were holding conventions simultaneously, resolutions should be adopted at each providing for the appointment of committees for the purpose of giving some practical turn to the agitation for amalgamation and for the establishment of a basis on which the different trades connected with iron and steel works could be united and one compact body created, better able to protect all interests. The members of each of the orders fully realized their mutual dependence and the advantages which ought to be derived from harmonious action when any troubles arose. President Joseph Bishop, of the United Sons of Vulcan, opened communication with the officers of the other two organizations, and in due time a meeting of the committees selected by each was arranged to be held at Pittsburg, December 7, 1875. The committee of the United Sons of Vulcan was composed of Joseph Bishop, President, E. H. McAurich, Deputy of the first district, David Reese, Deputy of the second district, and John Jarrett, Deputy of the sixth district. The committee of the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers, consisted of Vice Grand Sire Richard Sullivan, Grand Scribe Benjamin F. Spangler, James Penney, and James T. Clites. The committee of the Iron and Steel Roll Hands Union consisted of Grand President David A. Plant, Grand Secretary William Martin, and Grand Treasurer John W. Fultz. These committees met December 7, 1875, and framed a constitution and a code of by-laws for the government of the proposed Amalgamated Association. The proposed constitution was printed and submitted to all the sub-forges and sub-lodges of the three organiza-

tions named and to the membership. Instructed delegates were elected for the respective conventions of the orders, which by arrangement were to be simultaneously held in Pittsburg on the first Tuesday of August, 1876. At these conventions, separate sessions being held, an expression was obtained from the delegates relative to the advisability of amalgamating the different trades.

After much deliberation by each of the organizations a vote was taken, with the result that each favored the formation of an organization upon the principles prescribed by the joint committee that had met in December, 1875; and each body announced its readiness to enter into a joint session to consider the subject of amalgamation. So a special committee was appointed by each of the three organizations for the purpose of arranging for a joint session; and this it was determined to hold August 3, 1876, in Emerald Hall, Pittsburg, on which date, at two o'clock, the delegates of the three organizations met, and the convention, when called to order, elected James Grundy, of Lexington, Kentucky, representing the United Sons of Vulcan, as Chairman, and William Martin, of Columbus, Ohio, representing the Roll Hands Union, as Secretary. The roll of the delegates being called, it was found that forty-seven representatives of the United Sons of Vulcan, fifteen representatives of the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers, and six representatives of the Steel Roll Hands Union answered to their names. After much discussion upon the subject of amalgamation, a committee was appointed to rearrange the constitution, which had already been submitted by the committee of the year before, to embody a few changes in conformity with the ideas of some of the delegates in this union convention. This committee on constitution consisted of William Whitman, Walter McCabe, Elijah Cartwright, Samuel Rowley, W. H. Morris, Benjamin Evans, Joseph Hasley, Richard Ryk-

man, John McGrory, and Edward Joyce. The next day, August 4, the committee reported a revised constitution, which was adopted; and the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers of the United States was formed. Joseph Bishop was elected President and Secretary at this convention of the National Lodge, and Edward McGinness Treasurer. The offices of President and Secretary were combined, and so continued for the first two years of the life of the Association. The number of local lodges at the time of the formation of the Amalgamated Association was ninety-seven, and the number of members about three thousand.

National conventions of the Amalgamated Association have been held at the following times and places: Pittsburgh, 1876; Columbus, 1877; Wheeling, 1878; Youngstown, 1879; Pittsburgh, 1880; Cleveland, 1881; Chicago, 1882; Philadelphia, 1883; Pittsburgh, 1884; Wheeling, 1885. All these conventions were held in August. Those from 1886 to 1892 were held at Pittsburgh, and in June. As already stated, the number of sub-lodges in good standing, as reported at the convention of 1892, was two hundred and ninety-two, with twenty-four thousand taxable members. The National Lodge pays the mileage of its members, and the sub-lodges the actual earnings which the delegates would have received during the time of the session of the convention. These conventions last from two to three weeks. The sessions are lengthened on account of the many different scales which come before the committees and the time consumed in conferring upon them with manufacturers.

The Amalgamated Association has had but four Presidents, three Secretaries, and three Treasurers. Joseph Bishop was the first President. He was a boiler by occupation, and an American by birth. He served as the executive officer and Secretary two years, when the two offices were separated; and he then served one year and

five months as President, when he resigned, January 1, 1890. Previous to the organization of the Amalgamated Association he had served one year as a District Deputy and one year as President and Secretary of the United Sons of Vulcan. The second President was John Jarrett. He was elected January 10, 1880, and served until October 1, 1883. He is a boiler by occupation, and a native of Wales. Previous to his election as President of the order he was District Vice-President two years, and had served one year as District Deputy of the United Sons of Vulcan.

William Weihe was the third President, and was elected at the convention held at Philadelphia in August, 1883. He was installed into office August 1 of the same year, and served until November 1, 1892, making nine successive terms in all. He is a boiler by occupation, and an American by birth, having been born at Pittsburg, January 21, 1845. Previous to his election as President, he served four years on the board of trustees of the National Lodge, and one year as Secretary of the First District Executive Board. He served one term in the legislature of Pennsylvania, was for one term Vice-President of the American Federation of Labor while President of the Amalgamated Association; and, when that Association was formed, he was a member of the United Sons of Vulcan. His long term of office, serving faithfully and patriotically for nine years, proves the quality of the man. During all the unhappy difficulties at Homestead in 1892, and all other labor troubles in which the Amalgamated Association has been a party, there has never been, to my knowledge, any criticism concerning the integrity, the character, or the purity of the motives of Mr. Weihe. He has shown consummate skill as an administrator, and his fine knowledge of all the elements of his occupation renders his advice and his services of the greatest value. He was succeeded by W. M. Garland, the fourth President, who

was installed into office November 1, 1892. Mr. Garland is an American by birth, and a heater by occupation. He is now serving his first term. Previous to his election he was appointed assistant to the President, which position he filled for two years and four months. This position was established in June, 1890, to relieve the President of some of his arduous duties.

The first Secretary of the Amalgamated Association was William Martin from the Roll Hands Union, and a native of Scotland. President Bishop appointed him Secretary in 1878; but in 1879 the office of Secretary was made elective, under which condition Mr. Martin served until October 1, 1890. Mr. Martin has made his name well known as one of the intelligent leaders of labor in this country. His long experience as Secretary of the Amalgamated Association has placed him in the front ranks of the men who are leading labor organizations into effective influence. Stephen Madden was the second Secretary. He was taken from the ranks of the boilers, is a native of Ireland, and was installed into office August 1, 1890, serving until November 1, 1892. The third secretary is John C. Kilgallan, also a native of Ireland, and from the ranks of boilers. The first Treasurer was Edward McGinness, chosen from the boilers. Mr. McGinness served four years, from 1876 to 1880, and was succeeded by James Penney, a roller, who served from August, 1880, until the date of his death, November, 1890. He was succeeded by Edward Keil, the third Treasurer, a heater by occupation, who was installed into office November 7, 1891, and re-elected at the convention of 1892.

The experience of the Association has been varied, but, on the whole, brilliant and successful. With the brief history of its organization here given, the principles, purposes, and methods ought also to be fully and frankly stated. At the birth of the organization, August 4, 1876, the following declaration of the principles of the Amal-

gamented Association of Iron and Steel Workers of the United States was adopted:—

The objects of this Association shall be to obtain by conciliation, or by other means that are fair and legal, a fair remuneration to the members for their labor, and to afford mutual protection to members against broken contract, obnoxious rules, unlawful discharge, or other systems of injustice or oppression.

“Labor has no protection,—the weak are devoured by the strong. All wealth and all power centre in the hands of the few, and the many are their victims and their bondsmen.”

In all countries and at all times capital has been used by those possessing it to monopolize particular branches of business until the vast and various industrial pursuits of the world have been under the immediate control of a comparatively small portion of mankind. Although an unequal distribution of the world's wealth, it is perhaps necessary that it should be so.

To attain to the highest degree of success in any undertaking, it is necessary to have the most perfect and systematic arrangement possible. To acquire such a system, it requires the management of a business to be placed as nearly as possible under the control of one mind: thus concentration of wealth and business tact conduces to the most perfect working of the vast business machinery of the world. And there is, perhaps, no other organization of society so well calculated to benefit the laborer and advance the moral and social condition of the mechanic of the country, if those possessed of wealth were all actuated by those pure and philanthropic principles so necessary to the happiness of all. But, alas for the poor of humanity! such is not the case. “Wealth is power,” and practical experience teaches us that it is power too often used to depress and degrade the daily laborer.

Year after year the capital of the country becomes more and more concentrated in the hands of the few; and, in proportion as the wealth of the country becomes centralized, its power increases, and the laboring classes are impoverished. It therefore becomes us, as men who have to battle with the stern realities of life, to look this matter fair in the face. There is no dodging the question. Let every man give it a fair, full, and candid consideration, and then act according to his honest convictions. What position are we, the Iron and Steel Workers of America, to hold in society? Are we to receive an equivalent for our labor sufficient to maintain us in comparative independence and respectability, to procure the means with which to educate

our children, and qualify them to play their part in the world's drama? or must we be forced to bow the suppliant's knee to wealth, and earn by unprofitable toil a life too void of solace to confirm the very chains that bind us to our doom?

"In union there is strength," and in the formation of a National Amalgamated Association, embracing every Iron and Steel Worker in the country, a union founded upon a basis broad as the land in which we live, lies our only hope. Single-handed, we can accomplish nothing; but, united, there is no power of wrong we may not openly defy.

Let the Iron and Steel Workers of such places as have not already moved in this matter organize as quickly as possible, and connect themselves with the National Association. Do not be humbugged with the idea that this thing cannot succeed. We are not theorists: this is no visionary plan, but one eminently practicable. Nor can injustice be done to any one: no undue advantage can be taken of any of our employers. There is not, there cannot be, any good reason why they should not pay us a fair price for our labor. If the profits of their business are not sufficient to remunerate them for their trouble of doing business, let the consumer make the balance. The stereotype argument of our employers, in every attempt to reduce wages, is that their large expenses and small profits will not warrant the present prices for labor: therefore, those just able to live now must be content with less hereafter.

In answer, we maintain the expenses are not unreasonable, and the profits are large, and the aggregate great. There is no good reason why we should not receive a fair equivalent for our labor. A small reduction seriously diminishes the already scanty means of the operative and puts a large sum in the employer's pocket; and yet some of the manufacturers would appear charitable before the world.

We ask, Is it charitable, is it humane, is it honest, to take from the laborer, who is already fed, clothed, and lodged too poorly, a portion of his food and raiment, and deprive his family of the necessities of life by the common resort,—a reduction of wages? It must not be so.

To rescue our trades from the condition into which they have fallen, and raise ourselves to that condition in society to which we, as mechanics, are justly entitled, and to place ourselves on a foundation sufficiently strong to secure us from further encroachments, and to elevate the moral, social, and intellectual condition of every Iron and Steel Worker in the country, is the object of our National Association; and to the consummation of so desirable an object we, the delegates in convention assembled, do pledge ourselves to unceasing effort.

The delegates of the convention were urged on returning to their constituents to carry out the laws and principles of the Association, that the workmen throughout the mills might become interested in the new movement and properly educated in what was considered the welfare of the trade. The declaration of principles appealed to their sympathies, the constitution to their sense of discipline and loyalty to the new order.

The constitution, as adopted at the original convention, was based largely upon the constitution of the United Sons of Vulcan, although many features were further elaborated on account of the new conditions and circumstances accompanying the amalgamation of the orders. The constitution and general laws are now comprised in thirty articles, each article having various sections. As now framed, it is the constitution which will remain in force until August 1, 1893. It may be amended in some slight degree at the forthcoming annual convention, but not probably in any of its material elements. It may be well to notice some general features, leaving specific subjects for special treatment.

After stating the name and object of the Amalgamated Association, as set forth in the earlier part of this article, the constitution provides that the Association shall have supreme jurisdiction over the United States in which there are or may be subordinate lodges, and declares it to be the highest authority of the order within its jurisdiction. No subordinate lodge can exist, and no scale of prices can be recognized in any mill, except through the authority of the Association. The general office is located in the city of Pittsburg, and the constitution requires that the President and Secretary of the National Lodge shall reside in the city where the general office is located.

The elective officers of the National Association are a President, who shall also be organizer, a Secretary, an

Assistant Secretary, a Vice-President for each district or division of a district, a Treasurer, and three Trustees. The President must be elected from among the delegates at the annual convention. The constitution fully prescribes all his ministerial acts and all his duties, as well as the duties of the other officers. The President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and Treasurer are required to give bonds, the President and Secretary in the sum of \$5,000 each, the Assistant Secretary in the sum of \$2,500, and the Treasurer in the sum of \$10,000. The trustees and officers of the National Lodge, including the assistant to the President, constitute an Advisory Board to the President of the National Lodge, with whom he shall consult at his discretion.

Subordinate lodges must be composed of at least ten practical workmen from those working in and around rolling mills, steel works, and the like. They must be of good character, and not under eighteen years of age. After being chartered, a sub-lodge is entitled to representation in the National Association, a sub-lodge with less than one hundred members being entitled to one representative, and one having one hundred and twenty-five members being entitled to two representatives, and one representative for each additional one hundred members. Every representative in the national convention is entitled to one vote, but no one can vote unless present at the meeting when the vote is taken.

The national convention of the Association meets on the first Tuesday in June, at such place as shall be determined by the preceding convention. The order of business is clearly laid out in the rules, and it is usually followed with as much adherence to parliamentary law and usage as obtains in any deliberative body.

The constitution provides for an Executive Committee in each district or division, consisting of the Vice-President, his Deputies, the President of the National Lodge,

and the president of the lodge where any grievance may arise; but no person is allowed to serve as a member of the Executive Committee who is personally or directly interested in any grievance that may come before the Executive Committee.

Each sub-lodge has a Mill Committee, consisting of three members on each turn from each department represented in the lodge. The duty of this committee is to superintend and guard the interests of the Association in its various departments; and, when it becomes apparent that any advantage is being taken of the laws or of any member of the Association, and the special committee of the department where such advantage has been taken has failed to adjust the difficulty, the committees of the other departments, in conjunction with the committee having the particular grievance in hand, must jointly exhaust every effort with the manager of the works to settle the difficulty before reporting the case to the Vice-President of the particular district or division involved, and, in case this joint committee fails to meet, the lodge having the particular grievance in hand has power to call on the Vice-President of the district or the division. But, should the joint committee just described, after using all honorable means to bring about a settlement of the prevailing difficulty, fail therein, it must immediately call a special meeting of the respective lodges, jointly, in the district, and all members of each lodge working in the mills or works involved must be notified by the Mill Committee to attend the meeting, at which the grievance pending must be explicitly stated by the members of the joint committee; and, if the joint committee considers the grievance sufficient, the Vice-President of the district or division is notified, through the corresponding representative, under the instructions of his lodge and under its seal, and in no other manner, of the facts of the grievance, and then work must continue until the Vice-President has investigated

the case. This communication, under the seal of the sub-lodge, must be sent by the Vice-President to the general office of the Association, as a guarantee that the sub-lodge has complied with the law prior to the Vice-President undertaking to investigate the case. It is seen from this that great care is taken to have all matters brought regularly and legitimately before the officers having final jurisdiction.

The constitution makes ample provision for the establishment of scales of prices,—a complicated matter always, to describe which, even in its initiatory workings, would involve too much space for present consideration.

The constitution has well-drawn provisions relative to charges and trials, guarding religiously all the rights and privileges of subordinate lodges and members. Neither can be expelled or suspended or deprived of any rights or privileges except in accordance with the constitutional provisions.

The President of the National Association issues a quarterly password, through the Secretary of the National Lodge, to each subordinate lodge in good standing; but no lodge is entitled to receive the password unless it has complied with the provisions of the law requiring reports, payment of dues, and the like. No member can communicate the password to another or use it for any purpose whatever except to enter a lodge-room. The penalty for any other use is expulsion. The password is the only secret of the order.

All questions of a constitutional character must be referred to the Vice-President of the district or division having jurisdiction over the sub-lodge submitting them. Sub-lodges have the right to appeal from the decision of the Vice-President of their district or division to the President of the National Lodge, whose decision is final unless it be non-concurred in by two-thirds of the delegates present at the next succeeding national convention.

The constitution also provides for cards showing payment of dues, as well as withdrawal cards. These are means by which every member's standing may be known immediately.

Any member embezzling from or robbing a brother member, or leaving a brother member in debt, with intent to defraud him, or who has been fraudulently receiving or misapplying the funds of the Association or the money of any brother member or candidate, or who slanders any brother member, or who acts contrary to the established rules of the Association on any question affecting the price of labor or the system of work in any district, shall, upon trial and conviction thereof, be punished by a fine, suspension, or expulsion, as may be determined by two-thirds of the members present and passing upon the question.

The constitution lays down explicit rules governing the action of members and subordinate lodges, under a great variety of circumstances. These are largely technical, and relate to systems of work in different mills and on different materials.

The elective officers of subordinate lodges are a president, vice-president, recording secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, proper guards and guides, and three trustees. The strictest regulations have been adopted relative to the receipt and payment of money by the treasurers, and these regulations have been so well carried out that no embezzlement or improper diversion of money has taken place in the history of the Association, so far as the writer has been able to learn. The funds of every sub-lodge can be used only for legitimate purposes; and, in order that the funds may be had at as short notice as possible when required, it is the duty of the treasurer to deposit in bank all money over \$25.00.

Subordinate lodges have full power to make such by-laws for their government as they may deem necessary, provided they do not conflict with any of the rules or

regulations of the National Lodge; and no subordinate lodge can dissolve so long as there are ten members in good standing who wish to continue.

One of the special features of the constitution of the Amalgamated Association which requires notice relates to the revenues and disbursements of the order. The revenue of the National Association is derived as follows: For organizing a subordinate lodge the sum of \$25.00 is charged, this amount being payable at the time of organization. For issuing a duplicate charter to a subordinate lodge, for one destroyed or lost, the sum of \$5.00 is charged. There are various charges for remodelling seals, for rituals, for copies of the constitution, general laws, and blanks. In order to create a fund to meet the expenses of the National Association, the President is authorized to assess a quarterly or per capita tax on the different subordinate lodges sufficient to defray the expenses of the National Association; and, in order to create a fund for the support of victimized members or such members as may be engaged in legalized strikes, each member of the Association must pay to his lodge for this fund the sum of twenty-five cents per month. At the last stated meeting in each quarter the financial secretary of each lodge reports the correct number of members on his books taxable on account of the protective fund for the quarter, when an order is drawn on the treasurer for a sum equal to seventy-five cents for every member on the books thus reported; and the sum thus drawn is given to the corresponding representative, who must in turn, and as soon as possible, forward the amount to the Secretary of the National Lodge. In order to replenish the protective fund when it has been depleted by long and continuous drain, the President of the National Lodge has the power to levy a special assessment upon each member in good standing as reported on the past quarterly report, except members on strike or out

of work for two weeks. This special assessment must be collected by the financial secretary of the lodge, and sent to the Secretary of the National Lodge at once. Members who are sick or out of employment during the period of one full month are exempt from paying the twenty-five cents monthly to the protective fund during such non-employment, but members out of employment must report the fact to their lodge at every regular meeting: otherwise they are charged with the twenty-five cents per month for the protective fund.

To give an idea of the financial transactions of the National Lodge, I am allowed to quote from a statement for the first quarter, ending September 30, 1883, showing the total receipts to have been \$22,947.93, and total expenses \$11,306.16, one of the large items under expenses being the sum paid for strike benefits, \$5,557.00, and from the financial statement of the National Lodge for the first quarter, ending July 31, 1892, from which it appears that the total receipts for that quarter were \$93,435.89, and the total disbursements \$21,185.43, the strike benefits paid during that period being \$12,016.00.

From the time the Amalgamated Association was instituted, in 1876, to November, 1892, there had been paid out to men engaged in strikes and lockouts and those victimized over \$600,000; and the Association has never failed during the past ten years to pay its members their constitutional benefits as soon as such became due.

“Victimized” members are those discharged from their employment for taking an active part in the affairs of the Association, either as members of the mill or conference committees or for being active in promoting and guarding the interests of the Association. Should such members not be reinstated after every effort has been made in that direction, the case is carried to the lodge in precisely the same manner as it would be carried there, were the whole mill involved in difficulty, and then, should the Executive

Committee of the district or division decide that the member has been victimized and cannot be reinstated, and deem the organization unable to sustain a strike for his reinstatement, the victimized member is entitled to receive from the protective fund of the Association \$6 per week for a period of eight weeks, and no longer, unless in extreme cases, when it is discretionary with the President of the National Lodge to extend the time; and this rule applying to the payment of "victimized" benefits is the same as that governing the payment of strike benefits. If upon investigation it is found that victimized benefits have been paid to a member not entitled to them, the lodge in which he held membership must be responsible for the amount thus paid.

No sub-lodge is permitted to enter upon strike unless authorized by the Executive Committee of the district or division having jurisdiction; but, should the Executive Committee of a district or division find it necessary to legalize a strike in any one department of a mill or works, it is required that the men of all other departments shall also cease work until the difficulty is settled. When a strike has been legalized, and the general office has been properly notified of that fact in writing, the Secretary of the National Lodge must at once prepare a printed statement of all the facts in the case, so far as he can learn them, and forward the same, under the seal of the National Lodge, to all sub-lodges, warning all true men not to accept work in the mills, shops, or factories involved. Any subordinate lodge entering upon a strike legally is entitled to receive from the protective fund the sum of \$4.00 per week for each member actually engaged in the strike in the mill over which the lodge involved has jurisdiction, provided the members remain in the locality of the strike or notify the corresponding secretary of the subordinate lodge of their location and of their being unemployed each

week while on strike, and provided they have held membership in the Association for six months and are not in arrears. Furthermore, the subordinate lodge to which such members belong must be in good standing in the National Association. A strike must be legalized three months prior to July 1, or else no benefits are paid to any member for any strike during the months of July and August. The Vice-President of the district wherein a strike has been legalized must appoint, to serve in conjunction with the corresponding representative, two responsible men, one to act as treasurer, and the other as clerk. All moneys paid out on account of the strike must be accounted for on official sheets, one to be kept for the inspection of sub-lodges, and one to be filled out and promptly returned to the national office each time any benefits are paid. If upon investigation it is found that benefits have been paid to a member not entitled to them, the lodge in which the member receiving such illegal benefits holds his membership is held responsible for the amount thus paid, and no member shall be entitled to strike benefits for the first two weeks while on a legalized strike. All payments of benefits must date from the commencement of the fourth week after the strike has been legalized, and they shall not be allowed for any fractional part of the first week. No member who has been suspended or expelled is entitled to any strike benefits, whether engaged in a legalized strike or victimized, until he has been restored for at least six months. If members while receiving benefits work three or more days in any one week at any job, either inside or outside of a mill or factory, they are not entitled to benefits for that week; and any member on the benefit list, either on strike or victimized, who refuses to work a third turn in a week with a view to securing his benefits, shall have his name stricken from the benefit list. Members out of employment or idle on account of repairs when a strike takes place in one department of a mill,

and those who were idle previous to the commencement of such strike and were idle at the end of it, are not considered "on strike," and are not entitled to strike benefits; and no members of the Association are entitled to such benefits on account of a strike in any mill or factory in which they have promise of a situation,—that is to say, if a member has been promised a situation in a mill, and the mill should go on strike before he begins work, he is not entitled to strike benefits, and no member is entitled to strike benefits because of his refusal to work in what is known as a "black sheep" or non-union mill. So any member engaged in a legalized strike who procures a permanent position elsewhere forfeits his claim to strike benefits during the continuance of the strike in his old works. Any lodge which fails to forward its report called for as for April 30 before the 10th of May deprives its members of strike benefits, and is not entitled to a seat in the succeeding national convention.

All these provisions have been made that the order itself shall not be victimized by its own members. It seeks, in fact, to protect them from within and from without.

From the time of the declaration of the principles of the order and the adoption of its constitution the men generally employed in the iron and steel works of the country realized that, if they desired to better their condition, they ought to become united, and foster a fraternal feeling. This was done, and the order grew: new lodges were organized, and the old ones increased their membership. Such things carried with them great influence and brought prestige through which benefits were derived that otherwise could not have been obtained. The struggles of the order in its efforts to adopt scales of prices have been great, and have shown the intelligence of the men having the vexed question in charge. The

forming of scales of prices must have involved great thought, much technical knowledge, and great perseverance; for there have been many different rates of remuneration for the same class of work and many different views as to how far the scale should reach. Every care has been given to have the mills and factories thoroughly organized, and to secure knowledge of what changes could be made with the least friction to improve the conditions in the different branches of the iron and steel trades. Much time and discussion have been given to the consideration of the question of legalizing strikes and lockouts; and the constitution, as given on these points, was the result. As has been seen, strikes cannot be taken up locally and carried on through mere prejudice or temper. There must be calm and deliberate action on the part of the proper officers.

The system of legalizing strikes has not always been as here recited. The leading minds in the order became aware that a change was necessary, and in 1878 the method of procedure was changed. An executive committee was then created, through whose offices the real facts of a grievance must be procured and passed upon before a strike could be legalized. Prior to this change the facts could not be fully known, and the ordering of strikes was not systematized.

Various changes have also taken place in regard to benefits, experience determining the weakness of a rule or indicating the necessity for a new law.

The liberality of the order in regard to membership has been one of the sources of its prosperity. Membership is not compulsory,—that is to say, men are not obliged to be members of the Association in order to secure work; yet the officers of the order resort to moral suasion to secure membership. Individuals may do otherwise; but the chief concern of the order as such relative to non-members is that they shall receive like pay as members. Of

course, the Association is based on the principles of the trades-union; and it believes that the best interests of all men connected with the trades represented in it lie through membership and obedience to its rules and orders.

With its affairs thoroughly systematized, with the prestige of a successful order, and with a satisfactory bank account, the Association entered the great contest of 1892 with the Carnegie Company. A mixed strike and lock-out, that contest was waged more largely for the purpose of securing recognition or of defeating the Association than for any other reason. The question of wages and prices was subordinated, and the determination on the one hand to break the influence of the Amalgamated Association and on the other to crystallize and preserve it formed the real question at issue. It is not my province to discuss that contest. Future events will show whether the influence of the Amalgamated Association suffered from the result; and, in fact, the result itself must be considered as postponed rather than secured.

CARROLL D. WRIGHT.